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The Idea of Creation; its Origin and its Value

**A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE DIVINITY
SCHOOL IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**(DEPARTMENTS OF OLD TESTAMENT
AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)**

By WILLIAM CALDWELL

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PREFACE.

It is only fair to the University to say that this thesis was submitted five years ago. It is now printed with no addition, with few subtractions and without improvement except that, through the kindness of my friend, Dr. John M. P. Smith, I have been able to bring the bibliography up to date.

I am indebted to Professor George Burman Foster for suggesting the subject, for helpful hints as to the treatment and for much besides not easy to designate.

I can not refrain from a fuller expression of deep indebtedness to my lamented friend and instructor, President William Rainey Harper, under whose guidance and inspiration the Old Testament materials were worked out. Under his leadership the Old Testament became more human and more divine. Out of the historical and critical study there emerged a new spiritual unity and a new ethico-religious value, as the supreme purpose of creation and redemption was seen fulfilling itself in many ways through an age-long process; and the divine authority remained, not because supported by isolated texts torn from their contexts, but because through all the process the one increasing purpose was manifest, the purpose of holy love.

WILLIAM CALDWELL.

Fort Worth, Texas, May, 1909.

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I.

THE IDEA OF CREATION.

Introductory.

The Idea of Creation, in its highest sense, is peculiar to the circle of thought which moves through the three points of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; is a part of the theistic view of the world, and comes to its supreme expression in the doctrine of creation out of nothing by a supramundane God. It will be our thesis to show that this deliverance of faith, rightly interpreted, has abiding significance for religion; that, insofar as it expresses the unconditioned sovereignty of God, it is indispensable to Christianity.

The Idea Reflected in Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan Thought.

In the Jewish faith, "The belief in God as the Author of Creation, ranks first among the thirteen fundamentals enumerated by Maimonides." The doctrine is taught in all modern Jewish Catechisms. "To such a degree has this (doctrine) found acceptance as the doctrine of the Synagogue that God has come to be designated as 'He who spoke and the world sprang into existence.'" (Jewish Encyclopedia, Article "Creation.")

The Roman Catholic doctrine is stated most unequivocally: "God exists of Himself * * * the fundamental dogma concerning all things else is that they are produced out of nothing by God." "The Latin Church has always attached to *creare* the meaning of production out of nothing." "When Creation is described as a production from, or out of, nothing (*de nihilo* or *ex nihilo*), the "nothing" is not, of course, the matter out of which things are made. It means "out of no matter," or "not out of anything," or starting with absolute non-being and replacing it with being."

"To the unprejudiced mind the dogma of creation is as plain at the dogma of a self-existing God. The two notions are correlative. Things outside of God must, from the fact that they do not exist necessarily, depend on other Being. The Notion of Creation is free from contradiction, as no other is. It is without analogy, yet reason plainly tells us that creative power is a necessary attribute of God." (V. Manual of Catholic Theology, by Wilhelm and Scannel, Vol. I., p. 385ff.)

The Protestant doctrine on this point does not differ from the Roman Catholic. The Westminster Confession of Faith teaches that "It pleased God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible." (Chap. IV., Sec. I.) Dr. Charles Hodge says: "If there be no creation, there is no God."

In accordance with the rigid and uncompromising theism of Mohammedanism, the Idea of Creation is greatly emphasized in the Koran. There is no detailed account of Creation, details are of little consequence, and few concessions are made to popular conceits of the Arabs. Some acquaintance is shown with the Biblical traditions. In this unpoetic, and almost brutally practical, faith, we may see the value of the bare idea of creation in its clearest light.

"Call thou, in the name of thy Lord who created" (Sura 96.) The attribute of majesty and power implied in the bare, unqualified words "who created" is emphasized in the doctrine.

In Sura 11, the thought of Creation is closely coupled with that of Providence. "There is no creature which creepeth on the earth, but God provideth its food. * * * It is He who hath created the heavens and the earth in six days, (but His throne was above the waters before the creation thereof)."

The incomparable glory and power of God are seen in His creative activity.

"He hath created the heavens and the earth to manifest His justice." "Shall God, therefore, who created be as he who createth not?" (Sura 16). "But the idols which ye invoke, besides God, create nothing, but are themselves created." (Sura 16.) "It is He who hath given you life, and will hereafter cause you to die; afterwards he will again raise you to life." (Sura 22.)

Verily the idols which ye invoke, besides God, can never create a single fly, although they were assembled for that purpose; and if the fly snatch anything from them, they can not recover it. Weak is the petitioner and the petitioned,—God is powerful and mighty." (Sura 22.)

He hath created the heavens without visible pillars to sustain them, and thrown on the earth mountains firmly rooted, lest it should move with you * * * This is the creation of God: show

me now what they have created, who are worshipped beside Him?" (Sura 31.)

"Do they look up to the heaven above them and consider that we have raised it and adorned it, and that there are no flaws therein? We have also spread forth the earth * * * Is our power exhausted by the first creation?" No, there is "a new creation * * * the raising of the dead. We created man, and we know what his soul whispereth within him; and we are nearer unto him than his jugular vein." (Sura 50.)

"All things have we created * * * our command is no more than a single word, like the twinkling of an eye." (Sura 54.)

The one word was "*kun*" ("let there be"). That is, all things were created by a word in the twinkling of an eye. There can be no greater expression for stating the power of God. It is to be repeated that this doctrine is for Mohammedanism almost wholly devoid of the poetry that we find in the creation hymns, in and out of the Scriptures, and is of greatest practical value in guaranteeing God's power to reward His friends and punish His enemies. That is, it is the presupposition of Providence and moral government.

Other references to the Koran on this subject: Suras 21, 31, 41, 95, etc.

The Idea of Creation the Correlate of Theism.

The doctrine is not the antithesis of any temporal evolution; it is not to be bound up with any details, such as six days, whether these be interpreted literally or figuratively. Evolution may be a useful hypothesis as to certain processes and results, but it still leaves us with the ultimate question of matter and mind as we know them; did they always exist in their present apparent dualism; if not, which has the precedence, matter or mind? Or, is it possible to have something which is neither matter nor mind, but having in itself the potentiality of both?

The doctrine will exclude the pantheistic view of the world, which makes the universe the "existence form," the "living garment," of God.

All theories which exclude mind from causation in the universe will likewise be eliminated. Still further, the doctrine can not be harmonized with views which admit mind only in connection with matter.

This doctrine must also exclude all dualism like the Persian, positing an eternal struggle between a good and an evil being; or eternal matter with independent existence. Again, it excludes all thought of a God who finishes a universe, which thereafter exists apart from Him.

All thought of necessity is likewise shut out. God must be and remain unconditioned. Nothing can limit His holy will. The expression of the eternal Personality must be free, for there can be nothing without to limit the absolute Spirit. Creation, however, because of the richness of the divine nature, can not be merely the fiat of almighty power; it must be also the expression of holy love.

The creative act must ever transcend our thought. We can rest upon it as a fact, but we can form no conception of its method. But the origin of the heterogeneous within the homogeneous, the origin of motion in some primal mass, is just as inconceivable. The idea of creation does not depend upon our ability to picture it. The content of the concept may be left incomplete if we find the concept itself indispensable to our thought. That such is the case we hope to show.

Various Naturalistic Theories of the Cosmos.

It may be useful now to enter a little into details with respect to various other theories. We may conveniently start with a proposition which meets with universal assent, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. No one, I suppose, has ever been bold enough to suggest that the Universe came into existence in a vacuum, or created itself out of nothing. We all have to start with a certain *datum*. We must have an eternal God, or eternal matter, or eternal something. Those who deny the existence of an eternal God must affirm an eternal universe, suffering manifold changes, indeed, but always substantially the same. But the Universe, as we know it through geology and astronomy, has suffered extraordinary changes, carrying us back in thought to a primordial state, which we designate as chaos, over against cosmos. Now, the question arises, how is it possible to get from chaos to cosmos?

(a) There is the physical-law theory. According to this theory you have matter in a nebulous form extended beyond what we now know as the most remote planet.

This matter already has its well known, as well as its to us still

unknown, properties. Under the operation of perfectly definite laws of physics and chemistry there resulted what we know as the heavens and the earth, including suns, planets and all still nebulous matter in the skies, and also all the plants and animals, and their relations and adjustments, on our globe.

We can now make predictions on the basis of physical and chemical laws. Prof. Huxley thought that with adequate knowledge of these physical and chemical laws it would have been a little thing to write the future history of the heavens, as well as that of the animals and plants on the earth. The history of man in his struggle and victory over other animals, his besetment with illusions, his incorrigible tendency to project ideals and seek moral ends, would have been from our point of view, one of the most interesting chapters, albeit, it would have been a very short chapter and relatively an unimportant one, looked at from the viewpoint of the whole history. This theory, as worked out in detail with reference to the origin and movement of the heavenly bodies, is forever associated with the name of La Place. It has been an interesting hypothesis of method, has appealed to many scholars, has always attracted a certain type of the popular mind, has been accepted by many Christians as the manner of the divine activity. But after all is said, it does not offer us a satisfactory solution of the question of origin or being. The theory not only starts with matter, but with laws. Furthermore, a little motion has to be supposed, the "nebula has a *slow* rotation upon an axis;" then it has to be supposed that this mass, which is the Universe, is radiating heat.

(b) Another theory posits intelligence in nature itself. The apparent impossibility of getting ahead with blind forces of matter and motion, though there be physical and chemical laws granted, staggers even those who find no place for an extramundane mind. It seems to them that with the blind forces we could, at best, only have a shuffling about, but never the kind of order, adjustment and progress that we perceive in our world. So analogy has been sought from the biological world rather than from the chemico-physical world. The difficulty of passing from the non-living to the living has never been overcome. It is then proposed to start with life. We have it in the *plant*. It acts in a way suggestive of mental operation. The plant chooses and rejects elements of earth and air according to its needs; it turns its head to the light. It has an elective fellowship with earth, and air, and sky, and it adapts the

various elements to its own use for life, growth and reproduction.

But, it is said, no one has ever been able to lay hold of the principle of life and adaptation apart from the plant.

The case seems even stronger in the *animal* world. The animal begins as a microscopic germ, but that germ contains within its mimic world all the potencies of the future. Out of this come organs for light, fashioned in darkness, organs for hearing, fashioned in stillness, organs for breathing fashioned before they are needed, and an infinitely complex system of correlations for feeling, acting, willing, knowing, and all without any apparent external mental influence. From all this it is concluded we have a *natura naturans*, a *vis in rebus insita*, but we have not, and do not need, an extra-mundane mind. This is hylozoism.

Another form of this theory more clearly distinguishes matter and mind, but finds them inseparable. The mind is the soul of the world, *anima mundi*.

The analogy here is not simply from biology, but rests upon an interpretation of man, as made up of soul and body.

These theories not only set aside all thought of creation, but they leave us without any personal Being with whom we can come into personal relations. Even if they proved true our question of creation remains.

Modification of the Creation Idea, Jewish and Christian.

But there have not been wanting objections to the doctrine of creation *within* the Jewish and Christian Churches. "Jewish literature (Talmudic, pseudo-epigraphic, and philosophical) shows that the difficulties involved in this assumption of a creation *ex nihilo* * * * were recognized at a very early day, and that there were many among the Jews who spoke out on this subject with perfect candor and freedom. Around the first Chapter of Genesis was waged many a controversy with both fellow-Jews and non-Jews. Alexandrian Jews, under sway of Platonic and neo-Platonic ideas, conceived creation as carried into effect through agencies, though still an act of divine will, while the relation of the agencies to the Godhead is not always clearly defined, so that it is possible almost to regard them as divine hypostases,—sub-deities, as it were, with independent existence and a will of their own." (Article on "Creation," Jewish Encyclopedia.)

Christian thinkers have felt themselves free to hold views at variance with that commonly accepted by the Church in general.

Origen, though he referred all existence to the will of God, still held the Universe to be eternal.

Scotus Erigena, with pantheistic bent, said, "*non aliud Deo esse et velle et facere*," thus making the universe co-eternal with God.

Other Schoolmen, not pantheistic, held the world was co-eternal with God, though distinct from Him and dependent on Him.

Some modern theologians, under the influence of monistic philosophy, though believing in an extramundane personal God, have nevertheless assumed the relation between God and the world to be eternal.

The idea that God made the world out of his own substance has had its defenders among churchmen of all the ages. "Sir William Hamilton said that it is impossible to conceive the complement of existence being either increased or diminished. When anything new appears we are forced to regard it as something which had previously existed in another form. 'We are unable, on the one hand, to conceive nothing becoming something; or, on the other, something becoming nothing. When God is said to create out of nothing, we construe this to thought by supposing that He evolves existence out of Himself; we view the Creator as the cause of the Universe. *Ex nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil posse reverti* expresses, in its purest form, the whole intellectual phenomenon of causality.' " Again he says: "In like manner we conceive annihilation, only by conceiving the Creator to withdraw His creation from actuality into power. * * * The mind is thus compelled to recognize an absolute identity of existence in the effect and in the complement of its causes—between the *causatum* and the *causa*."

The Church has always withstood this objection to the doctrine of Creation.

The Question of Freedom in Creation.

Cousin said, God's "essence consists precisely in His creative power," and "He can not but produce. * * * God is no more without a world than a world is without God." Yet, he denied that He made creation unfree.

Some, rejecting natural or metaphysical necessity, hold that God is under moral necessity to create, because He is love, and love must have its objects.

Leibniz would say, God is benevolence and is under moral necessity to create beings to make them happy.

The common view held by the Church is that God is self-sufficient, and was under no obligation whatever to create, being wholly independent of His creatures.

The element of truth in this view, and it is all important, is that God must be and remain free and absolute Sovereign. A danger lies in the statement, viz.: That God may be an arbitrary despot and the world His slave or toy. But this danger is shut out by the fact that it is the very nature of the God manifested in Jesus Christ, who is Holy Love, to act *freely* in accordance with all the fulness and glory of His ethical Personality. The holiness of God, His apartness, must not be separated from His glory, His manifestation. The Seraphim chant "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," but the immediate antiphonal response is, "The fulness of the whole earth is His glory." God must not be self-sufficient in such a way as to render Him unethical. (On this section, see Hodge's Theology, Vol. I, p. 550ff.)

The History of the Idea of Creation.

The idea of Creation out of nothing is not explicitly stated in the Old Testament. It appears in II. Maccabees, 7:28. It seems implied in the New Testament, Rom., 4:17; Heb., 11:3. There is clearly evident a progress in the Old Testament, always toward the idea of creation out of nothing. If it can not positively be affirmed that this doctrine is reflected in Gen. 1, we may at least say that only one step remains. And so compatible is the chapter with that doctrine that it has for ages lent itself to it. Perhaps more than any other scripture this chapter strengthened the Church in its deliverance of faith which won over all divergent theories.

Pantokrator appears in the old Roman Symbol. It is brought to greater definiteness in the Apostles' Creed, "Creator of Heaven and Earth." This sharpening of the doctrine was brought out in opposition to the Gnostics. But it was already implicit at least in the earliest rule of faith.

Creation out of nothing appears in ecclesiastical writing first

in the Shepherd of Hermas. (Bk. ii. 1st Com.) He does not refer to the doctrine as something new or unknown. Justin, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, are not careful to distinguish creation from fashioning the world out of amorphous matter. But, since the days of Iranaeus and Tertullian, the doctrine of creation out of nothing has been dominant in the Church.

II.

THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF CREATION.

The theories on this subject may be classed as psychological and historical on the one hand, and super-psychological and super-historical on the other. The latter theory clings to some form of primeval revelation, or *Uroffenbarung*. The following quotation will illustrate this theory: "Besides being poetic, the Sacred Narrative (speaking of the account of Creation) is pre-eminently symbolical—it must be symbolical because the divine reality could never be intuitively known. The facts transcend all the possibility of human experience. Whatever knowledge the writer had in regard to the creative process must have been revealed by divine omnipotence. But such a revelation could not have been communicated in mere vocables. Words are themselves but signs—mere arbitrary signs of images and ideas—and can convey no meaning unless the image or the idea be already before the mind. The only natural hypothesis (of this supernatural occurrence) is that the knowledge was conveyed in a symbolic representation—a vision of the past in a succession of scenic representations with accompanying verbal announcements, like the visions of the future in the prophecies of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse of John. The original formless nebula, the primeval darkness, the brooding spirit producing motion, the consequent luminosity, the separation of the aeriform fluid into atmosphere and water, the emergence of the solid land, the appearance of the heavenly luminaries, the swarming of the waters with living things, and the appearance of birds of wing in the expanse of heaven, the bringing forth of land animals, and finally, the creation of man—all pass before His mind in a succession of pictorial representations of the actual progress of creation. The sights seen, the voices heard, the emotions aroused, are just those adapted to bring out the very words the *seer* actually uses, and in both cases the very best words that could have been used for such a purpose. The description being given from the barely optical, rather than the reflective or scientific standpoint more or less advanced, is on this very account the more vivid, as well as the more universal. It is the language read and understood by all." (Cocker, *Theistic Conception of the World*, p. 144.) The writer adds: "But he who can look upon it with a clear eye, and grasp its

real unity, must recognize it as a sacred hymn, composed, probably, by Adam, and chanted in the tents of the Patriarchs at their morning and evening devotions for more than 2,000 years, to commemorate the fact and keep alive the faith that the world is the work of the triune God." (*ibid.*, p. 143.)

A difficulty has been placed in the path of this theory by philological science which disposes of the assumption that Hebrew was the original language. With various languages, oral transmission could only be accurate by miracle. In any case the assumption of an unbroken tradition back to the first man, his composing a hymn for the morning and evening devotions of the Patriarchs, is attended with insurmountable difficulties. The whole theory makes an unwarranted appeal to the supernatural, and it must suffer dissolution not through the *a priori* difficulties above mentioned, it might outride them, but through the facts brought to light by the comparative treatment. We can not withdraw the Biblical accounts from the treatment given similar narratives in other writings of antiquity. The various nations had their stories of creation also.

"That which we read in the first chapter of Genesis is not an account dictated by God Himself, the possession of which was the exclusive privilege of the chosen people. It is a tradition whose origin is lost in the night of the remotest ages, and which all the great nations of Western Asia possessed in common, with some variations." (Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. xv.)

The evidence now accessible from various quarters is overwhelmingly convincing that the first chapter of Genesis not only does not go back to remotest times, but that it is a relatively late document within the Scriptures themselves. That it belongs to the writings assigned to P is admitted by all modern scholars who believe in historical criticism at all. It is probably post-Exilic. At best it can not be much before the Exile. The evidences that it is not an original document, but a re-working of somewhat refractory materials, are convincing. Its tone and treatment differ widely from that of other creation materials, even within the Old Testament.

Leaving this super-psychological and super-historical ground, we ask what light history and psychology can furnish us. In general, some idea of creation must have arisen almost with the dawn of human intelligence. As the little child asks the question, "Who made this, and this?" until it presses back to the question,

"Who made God?" so it must have been with the race in its childhood. Primitive man lived in closer contact with nature than we do. Her moods meant more to him than they do to us. Sunshine brought joy to his childish heart, and the storm, with its hail and rain, drove him to some cave or poor retreat among the trees, where he was forced to think. It is this break in his experience, this ceasing of his environment to function properly for his welfare that made thought necessary, and through thought finally gave him a measure of control of his environment. The very continuance of his existence depended on his being guided by the law of causation, and this law would lead him, after the analogy of his own experience, to assign personal causes to events. This road leads to the idea of creation. This does not imply a cosmogony in the earliest stages. This very comprehensive thought would come slowly and be subject to many variations in form. "Such a theory is never found on the lowest stages of human culture. Thus it never occurred to the Eskimos, says Dr. Brinton, that the earth had a beginning." (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Art. "Cosmogony.")

But all the principal nations had their theories about the world, theogonies as well as cosmogonies. Generally the gods arose out of the forces of nature, and came to power through struggle, as Marduk won the rights of creation and lordship by slaying the dragon of chaos. The Creator is rather a necessary *organizer*. He is often evolved from the abyss itself.

Elements are found in the creation literature of the Old Testament in common with similar literature of several other peoples. The older method of explaining these likenesses as due to a primeval revelation, Israel being the bearer of the true light, and other peoples having broken lights, has proven unsatisfactory. It must, of course, be allowed that similarity does not necessarily imply dependence. For example, the idea of a world-egg appears in Phoenicia, Egypt, India, China, Polynesia and Finland, and it, no doubt, existed in many other quarters. This is not necessarily a witness of a common derivation. The world has made a more or less similar impression on man everywhere, varying according to the man's place in the scale of culture. Everywhere the egg, with its apparently almost homogeneous mass, yielding the heterogeneous forms of life and motion, must have caught the serious attention of mankind. It would be a natural step from this mystery to the mystery of the world above and below, especially as the sky

above looks so much like the inner side of an egg shell with the iridescent lining.

But that Israel is debtor to other nations for creation materials can be no longer doubted; and its obligation is by all means greatest to Assyria and Babylonia. Until comparatively recently our knowledge of these ancient monarchies was scanty, and dependent upon uncertain authority. The writings of Berosus, the Babylonian historian (c. 250 B. C.) came to us at third hand in Eusebius, who quoted them to show their absurdity, and it was supposed that he distorted them to make them seem more absurd. But, through the labors of George Smith and his successors, we have the testimony of the original cuneiform inscriptions from the library of Assurbanipal (668-626 B. C.) excavated at Kouyunjik. In this library were found the so-called creation tablets, a creation-epic written on seven tablets. The points in common between these tablets and the creation materials of the Old Testament are so numerous as to leave the matter past all doubt that they do not have an independent origin. They must have a common original which they copied very closely, or one must be dependent on the other. It is no longer necessary, in the light of Assyrian and Babylonian history, to say that these lands did not get their creation myths from Israel. Israel's glory is not lessened by not having furnished this wild and barbaric mythology. On the other hand, the strength of Israel, her indomitable hold on that which was central and eternally abiding, is evident in that she was able to take these variegated myths and under the dominance of her supreme idea of Jehovah to make them serve an eternal purpose. The daring myth of the world-egg is retired as useless, but it has left us, in the word "brooding," one of the most beautiful of metaphors. While the seven creation tablets in their present form do not go back of the seventh century B. C., it is believed from several lines of evidence (see *The Seven Creation Tablets*, L. W. King) that the elements in the creation legends of Babylonia may be traced back in some form or other to 2500 or 3000 B. C.

Professor Sayce dates the Cuthean legend of creation, which is very different from the account given by the Seven Tablets, at 2350 B. C. This legend bears no resemblance to the first chapter of Genesis.

If we grant that Babylonian creation mythology exerted a tremendous shaping influence on the creation literature of the Old

Testament, we shall still find scholars in the widest disagreement as to when this influence was exerted. With reference to the first chapter of Genesis, Gunkel (*Schoepfung und Chaos*, p. 4) has given the various possible dates with their respective defenders. The possible dates are, time of Abraham (Delitzsch), time of Tel-el-Amarna Tablets (Barton), Kingdom of Israel (Schultz), Assyrian dominion in Judah (Budde, etc.), the time of the Exile (Stade, etc.). Dillmann combats the idea of Babylonian origin. Wellhausen considers Genesis 1 a "free composition" of an Exilic author. The question is left unsettled by Schrader, Winckler, and Holzinger.

But the creation materials within the Old Testament show several different strata. There is a wide difference between the poetic presentations of Job, 104th Psalm, and other Psalms, and the measured prose of Genesis 1. The poetic pieces in the Old Testament in their use of mythological imagery lie close to the creation hymns of the cuneiform inscriptions. They seem to be the connecting link with the Babylonian source.

Do we then yield the point that Israel got its creation idea from Babylonia? By no means. The best evidence in the case is that Babylonia never attained to Israel's idea of creation because it never attained to Israel's theistic concept. The creation idea in which we are interested is not to be found by borrowing the outworn mythological finery of a broken people. It is an idea that arises from within. It may be historically conditioned, but in its essence it can not be borrowed at all, least of all can it be borrowed from those who do not possess it.

It will now be interesting to sketch the idea within Israel itself. In view of the fact that the documents containing the doctrine of creation in the Old Testament are late, it has been supposed that Israel had no cosmogonic stories. Gunkel has attempted to disprove this, and, it has been thought, successfully. His contention may be granted that it is impossible to think that Israel alone of all the nations, was lacking in the current stories and ideas of creation. But it is enough for our purposes that references to creation are conspicuously absent in the oldest parts of the Old Testament, and that the idea of creation certainly played no important role in the early happy days of Israel. The problem is a simple one: the idea of creation in an absolute sense is incompatible with the idea of a national God. It is not too hazardous to say

that no one of the national prophets of Israel ever uses the doctrine of creation as a motive or inspiration. Gunkel's apology for their silence, that the prophets had something on hand more practical than instructions concerning the past, is quite inadequate. Nothing seemed more *practical* than this very doctrine to the great Prophet of the Exile. The passage in Amos 4:13, 5:8, 9:5f, (which come in like parenthetical doxologies on creation) are later insertions. Zech. 12:1 is late, as, almost certainly, Isa. 37:16. There are four great sources of the doctrine of creation in the Old Testament. They are Job, Isa. 40ff, Genesis 1, and the later Psalms. It is significant that these portions of Scripture are all almost uniformly assigned to a period after the captivity of Judah. That is to say, the idea of creation arose when God was revealed as the God of Providence over the whole earth and would be the God of redemption to His people. Whatever foregleams there were of this doctrine before, it is certain that the doctrine only came to consciousness in the terrible crisis of the nation. The old limited theory broke down by the dead weight of facts. It now came to be seen that either Jehovah had to give up Israel or else rule the whole world. The later prophets saw Him able to do the latter, because he was Creator of all the world.

To put it theologically, God did not reveal Himself clearly to Israel in the beginning as the Creator of the Universe, and then reveal himself as the particular God of Israel in a unique way. But, first of all, Israel came to know Jehovah as a national God and a strong deliverer from the Egyptians and strong defender against the nations of Canaan. That is, an *experience* of God in deliverance, salvation, preceded more difficult *ideas* about Him. But so long as Jehovah brings success, nothing is needed but loyalty; broader ideas would be useless. Israel, however, has not only received salvation, she has received a divine vocation—to rule and to bless the world.

But Israel awoke only slowly to the consciousness of her calling. It was only when the Prophets had spent themselves in fruitless toil, striving to call the people away from their infatuation of being the chosen of God, the favorites of heaven, to the acceptance of their true vocation, and when consequently they went into captivity, that they began to *realize* their mission, as chosen through the universal love of God for the blessing of all nations. Jonah is a picture of Israel held up to ridicule for not rising to

its world-wide vocation. The Songs of the Servant, Isa. 42:1-4, 49:1-6, 50:4-9, 52:13-53:12, give us the true Israel carrying salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth, suffering even unto death, and victorious in spite of death. Through the terrible discipline of the Exile, and national dissolution, and guided by the martyred prophets of the past, and the heroic prophets of the present, Israel came to see Jehovah as unlimited sovereign of nations and history. He can only be this in virtue of His power over heaven and earth, which furnish the conditions of man's moral, as well as natural, life—in short, He is Creator. It is a matter of practical importance that we should remember the order of revelation to Israel. The particularism of Israel would be more blameworthy if the first leaf of its history had contained a doctrine of the creation of the world by God, as the first leaf of its Bible subsequently came to do. Like other ideas, the idea of creation suffered *Verschiebung*. Though it arose in the process, and in consequence, of the history it came in the written memorials of that history to stand at its source, as at least one of the causes that made it possible. But we have only to look into the history itself to see how highly improbable it is, not to say impossible, that a people who began its history with the first chapter of Genesis should have gone for centuries through the mire of idolatry, with only occasional and very partial regaining of their original *terra firma*.

III.

THE IDEA OF CREATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Introduction: Purpose of the Sacred Writers.

The Sacred Writers of the Scriptures never set themselves to teach science. Mr. Huxley, however, says: "But how does the apologist know what the Biblical writers intended to teach, and what they did not intend to teach?" In the matter in hand it seems possible to make a convincing answer. In general, it is perfectly clear that the genius of the Hebrew race is for religion, not science. It was the Greeks who sought after wisdom,—science; the Jews sought after a sign,—divine manifestation. Nothing is clearer than that the Hebrews were not vitally interested in second causes, for which alone science cares. To "understand" an event was to the Hebrew to refer it to God. How God accomplished it was of secondary importance. With the scientist exactly the reverse is the case. For the scientist to "understand" an event is to find its place in a chain of causation. Science, as such, makes no statements as to God; it has authority only in the kingdom of second causes. Now, granting this, is it not perfectly clear that the Hebrew writer never intended to teach science? His statements will necessarily involve materials common to science, because both must make statements in terms of the world. The sacred writer must deal with the world of experience, else men can not be religious till they have found a method of abstraction from experience, such as science gives. This was impossible in early days of the race, and is still impossible, except to a limited intellectual aristocracy of the race. If there are some inconveniences resulting from the divine method, they would be manifold greater if the sacred writers had spoken in accurate scientific *formulae*. Even the proud scientist of today would probably be unable to do more than touch the hem of the garment of the Lord were revelation made in terms of absolute science.

Still further, it must be thankfully remembered that these inconveniences fall upon those most able to bear them and not upon the "poor and needy." It is the crowning testimony of the divinity of our message that it comes to the poor and ignorant. On the other hand, we owe the life of God in the world, to speak from man's side, chiefly to the poor man of humble and contrite spirit,

not to the scientist. The religious soul bows itself in adoration in the felt presence of God. The cold scientist may call this superstition, and may analyze this flower of the Spirit till he leaves us ashes and gases, but the religious man will go on with his devotions, on the basis of an experience more immediate and interior than can be attained by the scientist. His world is the real world, that of the scientist, an abstract world constructed for a purpose. The purpose is good. Indeed, his construction is indispensable for the development of the race, to control the real world.

The sacred writer, then, must not be condemned on scientific grounds if he is not standing on scientific ground at all. Though he may, from the natural bent of the human mind, fall into scientific form, his purpose is not to present science, but to exalt God as Wisdom, and Power, and Love, or to show man's relation to God. He describes acts and processes with the emphasis upon the majesty and power, the wisdom and sovereignty of God, or on the weakness, dependence, or sinfulness of man. It will not affect the religious idea of the sovereignty of God if the writer has failed to express it in scientifically exact language. The idea did not arise through science, but through the great facts of experience, and science cannot annul it. The idea of creation is a product of the religious judgment, or valuation of the world in its totality. Science moves in a smaller circle, and, perhaps, must pronounce ultimate questions insoluble. This, again, convinces us that the Hebrew writer was not working in the realm of science at all.

Idea of Creation in Early Prophetism (National).

Gen. 2:4b-3.

The oldest creation document in the Old Testament is that found in the second chapter of Genesis. The thought of creation, however, does not come to its highest expression in this chapter. It is an account of the creation of man, and it reflects the theology of the narratives of the patriarchal period, and moves within the narrower lines of national prophetism. Furthermore, it lives in an atmosphere of poetry; its statements are picturesque rather than formal. This accounts for the fact that the contestants in the warfare between science and theology have not selected the second chapter of Genesis, but the first, as their battlefield. This docu-

ment belongs to the *Jehovist* materials, which make up the most romantic and interesting part of the Book of Genesis. To this writer we owe the picturesque stories that have made Genesis live in the hearts of men for so many centuries, stories so full of what is most deeply human, tender and religious. In no part of his work is there wanting that deep moral and religious earnestness which disarms literal criticism. He has laid hold of God, not as a metaphysical power, nor even as far away Divinity, but as a personal and living God, who can be called by a personal name and described as acting in a very human way. But we are to remember that anthropomorphism is necessary to religion, and that the *Jehovist* differs from the other sacred writers, not in kind, but only in degree in his use of anthropomorphisms. It is not because he uses anthropomorphisms, that he does not yield us the highest idea of creation, but because he did not yet need the great idea which later became the indispensable requisite for the survival of the religion of Israel. The religion of the Golden Age, or religion in its "classic times," did not need such mighty *ideas* as were demanded when the dissolution of religion became a possibility to be faced. The ideas had to undergo revision, enlargement, strengthening, that the religion of later times might make one music with that of former times, "but vaster."

It has been generally supposed that we have here a continuation of the account of creation contained in the first chapter of Genesis, that it narrows the story from the universal to the particular in a perfectly natural way. It is said: "It is professedly not an account of creation, but a sequel to that account." That it is not professedly an account of the creation of the world is to be admitted. It is an account of the creation of man, and even that is governed by an ulterior aim. But that it is a sequel to Genesis 1 by the same hand is not to be admitted. As Dillmann says: "It is not even to be supposed that the second narrator presupposed the first and wished only to supplement him. A supplementer would have introduced his work into a scheme of days and would not have reported anything in conflict with the first report without showing how the two agree. We should expect implied allusions in the second to the first. This is nowhere found except in Jehovah Elohim."

If this chapter were a natural continuation of the first chapter, we should expect a beautiful, new world, full of life, animal and

vegetable, green valleys cut by sparkling streams swarming with fishes, trees with birds among the branches, flowers with bees sucking their honey, man and his mate in dominion over all creation. On the contrary we find ourselves on a dry, barren, desert land, with no shrub in sight and no living thing, for there is no water to make vegetation possible, and no man to irrigate and cultivate the land. This account has striking resemblances to the second Babylonian account of creation, which also does not have the creation of the world as its principal theme.

"No plant had been brought forth,

No tree had been created,"

(But the explanation is different.)

"The whole of the lands were sea."

(See Gunkel's *Schoepfung u. Chaos*, p. 419.)

It is psychologically natural that the final arrangement of the materials should be as it is in our Bibles, going from the most general to the particular,—the creation of the whole Universe before arranging a nest for man, the favorite of heaven and lord of creation. But it is psychologically natural that in origin the particular should precede the general, that man's creation and the thoughts touching him most nearly should be wrought out and systematically committed to writing before a cosmogony as a whole should be elaborated. Some races have never risen to the thought of a cosmogony; but to explain the origin of man was a more pressing need. And in this the heathen nations, especially the Babylonian and Egyptian, approach more nearly to the religious plane of Israel than they do in the creation of the world. (See *Encyclopedia Britannica* Art. "Cosmogony.")

The chief purpose of the narrative is to give a starting point for the history of redemption. It must ever be borne in mind how profoundly religious is the author, and that therefore he keeps before his eye the one goal of redemption. Man is the center of all his concentric circles, and all his problems must find their solution in the constitution of man's nature, the environment of his early days, and Jehovah with whom he had to do. The constitution of his nature is most clearly set forth. A fearful dualism of matter and spirit conditions him from the outset. He is above the animals, but he shares much of their nature. His one human companion is one in nature with himself, albeit not wholly with "like proportion of lineaments, of manners and of spirit," for she is

weaker and more accessible, more open to the dangers of wonder, of impulse and desire. Herein lay the fatal weak spot in the first human pair struggling under humanity's dualism of flesh and spirit. And yet woman was not sent upon Adam as Pandora, who was, according to the Greek myth, sent upon man as a punishment.

The environment is not that of a hard toiler. Man is in a garden with light labor and no cares. Perhaps herein lay a danger. The man and his wife live without shelter except that of the leafy trees; without food except fruits and vegetables eaten raw, without clothes and without shame. In many ways man is a child of nature, but he is not a savage. He has an extensive command of language and is unembarrassed in the presence of God. But it is quite extreme to say "Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise."

The view of God is more naïve than that of later times. He works directly, not through the spirit and word, as in the first chapter of Genesis, nor through wisdom, as in the eighth chapter of Proverbs. He forms man by means of clay, breathes into him the breath of life; plants a garden, puts man into it; forms animals supposedly after the same manner as man (though breathing into them is not implied); deliberates, "It is not good for man to be alone," causes the animals to pass before Adam, with the result that Adam yearns for some companionship that can comfort his loneliness; provides a helpmeet, brings her to man for approval, which Adam bestows without stint and with glee. God is not infinitely above man (cf. Eccl. 5:2b). He does not seem so much an infinite Creator as an Artificer, He uses means, clay (2:7), rib (2:21), skins (3:21).

While the language is exceedingly realistic and the anthropomorphism seems very pronounced, we are not hastily to conclude that the writer uses the language with cold western literalism. We must remember that he *may* use the language of the potter without supposing that God actually visibly so worked. There may lie a hint in the "deep sleep" that God never allows Himself to appear to men. (Cf. Gen. 19:17, 32:26.)

The Jewish and Christian Churches can not have been wrong in seeing the promise of redemption in 3:15. Thus we are not left with a world-weary humanity, sighing for a lost paradise and groaning under the "weary weight of all this unintelligible world," but there is added the hope of victory. The end of all, then, is,

this story of creation of man has for its roots the hard facts of sin and consequent suffering; for its fruits the hope of redemption, for which the whole creation waits.

The Idea of Creation in the Wisdom Literature.

1. Proverbs 3:19, 20; 8:22-31.

Proverbs 3:19-20 and 8:22-31 has been called a third cosmology. (Cheyne, Enc. Brit. "Cosmogony.")

What is its purpose and its value? We can not be sure of knowing the nature of this cosmology without knowing something of the Book of which it forms only a small part. The purpose of the Book of Proverbs seems to be to present the essence of the Law for practical life. Much attention in it is paid to the form of words, beauty of style; epigrammatic gems flash from its pages. And it is to give the Law in a reflective, semi-philosophic form. But the philosophy is always practical, not speculative but for ordinary life. It does not give a logic or psychology of ethics. It does not use the word "conscience," or the word "duty." It does not seek to know the genesis of the idea of moral obligation. It yields the hypothetical rather than the categorical imperative. Its interest is not so much with the science as with the art of living. This art, however, is not aesthetical, but practical. It is a manual for helping men to make the best of life. This can only be done under the guidance of religion. God is supreme, absolute in power and wisdom. The absoluteness of God is placed in bold relief by the omission of all mention of other supernatural beings, even such as might serve administrative purposes. A wise divine government is assumed as the presupposition and background of a human life well-governed. Men have a right to think, but wisdom is with the Lord. He, however, will share it with men; it is the desire of the author to mediate this wisdom to men (1:2-6). Wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, that is, religion (1:7); its end is a well-ordered life. Wisdom may sustain a distant relationship to philosophy, but not to science. It starts with a Supreme Being, who is Governor and Preserver of a moral world. "Wisdom is to understand, so far as it is permitted to man's finite intelligence, the manifold adaptation and harmony, the beauty and utility, of His works and ways, and to turn our knowledge of them to practical account." (Cambridge Bible; Proverbs, p. 10.)

In the eighth chapter Wisdom is personified, and brought into connection with Creation. She speaks of herself as antedating various typical works of creation. The negative form of this "cosmology" reminds us of the second Babylonian account, and gives us a hint that here, as there, the main point is not to describe Creation, but to make use of the thought of Creation for an ulterior aim. One aspect of the teaching is already made clear, in the less highly poetic form, in 3:19, 20:

"Jehovah, by wisdom, founded the earth;
By understanding he established the heavens.
By his knowledge the depths were broken up,
And the skies drop down the dew."

That is, the world is not the product of blind brutal forces, but is the product of the good God, who is as wise as He is good.

The statement here made concerning the moral and physical world is perhaps unsurpassed in the Old Testament. Wisdom in Creation is in control of human society. The essential idea is that the Universe is one, there is one cosmos. Man is a microcosm within the macrocosm. The light of the world should light every man. The eternal wisdom of God is to be the eternal wisdom of men. (Toy, Proverbs, p. xvii.)

We shall not stumble over the fact that Wisdom speaks the language of men, if we can believe her "delight was with the sons of men." (8:31.) The passage is not valuable for its statement concerning the world, but for its statement of the relation of God to the world, which is independent of natural knowledge of the world. God is above the world, and He does not place man under blind forces working by chance. God makes wisdom the first-born of His creatures. He acts according to wise law, but this law is the expression of His own Being. We have here a unitary view of the world necessary to science, and a spiritual view necessary to religion. Both science and religion are interested in the orderliness of the universe. If beauty and harmony of the universe emerge from a conflict of forces, seemingly at war, by some process of evolution, we are not less certain that a Creative Mind is necessary, back of the process and in the process, in guidance of the complex forces to the attainment of the harmony and beauty of it all.

The burden of this passage, in keeping with the Book of

Proverbs in which it occurs, is practical. The moral and religious earnestness is seen in that Wisdom calls to men to seek her as the supreme good of life. That is, the law of life is the law of creation. There is but one supreme purpose in the universe, that is, God's purpose in the creation is the same as his purpose in redemption. The wisdom of God is to flow down into the lives of men that they may have life and have it more abundantly. The purpose of God then (whatever may be the outermost reach of its vast curve) is for the good, for the salvation of men.

"I was by Him * * *

Rejoicing in His habitable earth;

(30, 31) And my delight was with the sons of men.

(36) He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul;
All they that hate me love death.

(32) Now, therefore, hearken unto me."

Nothing could be farther from the passage than vain cosmological speculation, or pedantic scientific statements. Its purpose is redemption. Its argument is that there is a Providence that shapes our ends wisely, and this Providence is rooted and grounded in the Power, Love and Wisdom of the Creator.

2. Book of Job.

It is a significant fact that the idea of creation plays so large a part in the Book of Job, the great "epic of the inner life." Neither Job nor his friends seem to have any doubt as to God's existence, or that he was a Creator, yet there is something wanting in the early chapters that finds place in later chapters. Is it not a question of the *kind of Creator*, the greatness of His creation, that arises? For some idea of creation is expressed by nearly all the speakers. Eliphaz, in his first speech, asks: "Can a man be pure before his Maker?" (4:17.) God is the Moral Governor of the world, so that the man who trusts in Him shall be in league with the beasts and stones of the earth. (5:23 cf. Rom. 8:28.)

Bildad sees man in the hand of God, as dependent on Him as the rush is dependent on water. (8:11-13.) That God has created all his trouble is perfectly clear to Job. He does not blame the winds that have striven together with the Sabceans to wreck his

happiness. He recognizes the "arrows of the Almighty" within him. (6:4.) It is just because he is in the hands of God that he is so burdened. (7:1f.) He asks with irony if he is a sea monster, the writhing, raging sea itself, that must be watched lest the Universe suffer harm. He can not escape God's hand—not even at night, for then horrible dreams haunt him. He cries, "let me alone." Job gives a wonderful description of God's power. (9:5-10.) But this does not, at the time, bring him rest and peace. In fact, in this chapter (see Dr. A. B. Davidson in Cambridge Bible) "Job's spirit reaches the lowest abyss of its alienation from God." (9:24.) "The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; *if not He, who then is it?*" God's power is great, but He is unmoral. There appears in Job a balancing of God as He at the time appears and the idea of God which he had entertained before. "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me! Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into the dust again?" (10:9-8.) Will a potter make a beautiful vessel only to crumble it into dust again? Why did God ever give him existence (10:18)? Job, in reply to Zophar's speech, says:

"Who knoweth not in all these
That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?
In whose hand is the souls of every living thing,
And the breath of all mankind." (12:9, 10.)

Eliphaz, in his second speech, refers to Creation and asks, sarcastically, if Job was the First Man (Wisdom?), or, if he was made before the hills?

In reply to Bildad's rather weak effort on the greatness of God, Job rises to eloquence on the same subject. But all this afforded Job no relief from the dreadful moral inequalities which he saw everywhere about him. Job exhibits the power of God in Heaven, Earth and Hades. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place and hangeth the earth upon nothing. (27:6.)

When Job has, with a few poetic touches, recalled some wonders of God, he adds:

"So these are the outskirts of His ways;
And how small a whisper is that which we hear of Him
But the thunder of His power who can understand?"
(26:14.)

We see but the outskirts; hear but a whisper. The full glory of His work, the thunder of His power is not within the limit of man's mind (cf. ch. 38).

Elihu, too, shows belief in a creation. He recognizes God as his Maker. (32:22.) The Spirit of God has made him, the breath of the Almighty has given him life. (33:4.) He is formed of clay. (33:6.) In his view, no motive for injustice could be found in a Creator, and it is inconceivable in the Ruler of all. (He would say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?") To him it is inconsistent with the idea of God, that He should be unjust. Job would have agreed to this in the days of his prosperity; now he can not reconcile this thought with his conscious innocence.

Elihu will still further ascribe righteousness to his Maker. He discusses the incomparable greatness of God in various details of nature. (36:26ff.) Elihu would have Job consider the wonders of creation and bow in awe and reverence before their Creator. (37:14-23.)

One climax is reached in chapter 28, where the negative result of the discussion is presented. The struggle has really been between the voice from Sinai and the voice that rang out clear on creation morning: Let there be light and life to the whole world. It is a struggle between a faith, crippled by geography, and patriotism and a faith which has a "passion for the planet." The voice from Sinai was a covenant between Jehovah and a particular people. Blessings were to follow loyalty, cursings to follow sin. Moses was not a poet, but a law-giver and leader. No leader can make subtle distinctions if he is to direct great masses of men.

This voice from Sinai was wrought out in beautiful epigrams and brought home to the heart of the people in many gems under sanction of the name of Solomon, the wisest of men.

Wisdom came to be a choice word. Life had partly passed from under the bare commands of the law. Men had come to see the beauty of virtue.

Wisdom personified offers herself to men. If they will but hearken unto her reasonable voice, salvation is sure. But later it comes to be asked: "Where can wisdom be found?" To the writer of Job 28, the radiant figure that cried unto men has vanished. Now, it is he who cries, but there is no answer. He means

by this to tell the secret that has forced itself irresistibly upon his own bereft heart, that a knowledge of the world-plan is beyond the intellectual grasp of man. It is assumed that there is a fixed order. The phenomena breaking in upon man are manifestations of God fulfilling Himself in many ways. But wisdom, the secret of the Lord, is hidden from men. Man has a "wisdom," to be sure, assigned to him. It is reverent obedience, the fear of the Lord.

But the grand climax is not in any intellectual answer that is to come from the discussion, but in the religious solution in the person of Job himself.

After one trial, it is said: "In all this Job sinned not nor imputed wrong to God." (1:22.) After another: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this Job sinned not with his lips." (2:10.) This is the ideal position held by Job at the beginning of his trial, but he fell from it. "Job opened his mouth and cursed his day"—(3:1) "a kind of wild impossible revision of Providence." Job has not been so successful in his trial that he may simply be informed that his afflictions came upon him as a trial of righteousness. Furthermore, through the gloom that settled upon him he has looked upon the world at large and found insoluble problems everywhere, and has defiantly contended with God. Job has failed to find God in the world by induction from facts, when he turned from fellowship with Him. And God does not come back to Job by the way of the understanding. Job must yet prove himself disinterested, against the insinuation of the Satan. He must rise to something of the spirituality of the Psalmist who said: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." (Ps. 73:24, 25.)

To accomplish this God reveals Himself. "In a series of splendid pictures from inanimate nature and the world of animal life He makes all the glory of His being pass before Job." His humbled answer is: "Now mine eye seeth thee." There is no solution given, but the God of Creation and Providence reveals His glory in creation and providence. The purpose was not to communicate information concerning creation, but to reveal the Creator. This is done in ch. 38ff.

The Book of Job is a study in Providence. This thought is inseparably connected with creation, which has an emphasis here

unparalleled except in Isaiah 40ff. The main question is, Can Religion live with the current idea of God? The answer of the Book is not simply negative; it presents to us an idea of God that will function in the life of the individual and the nation. It is very far from the purpose of the Book of Job to teach science, or even theology in a narrow sense, least of all to give a *theoretical* theodicy. The purpose of the Book is practical, deeply religious, not merely poetic or philosophical. It is likely the author had before him a particular, trying experience of the people of Israel, when suffering fell upon many who were innocent, and when a larger law was needed than was furnished by the national idea of God. God must transcend the limits of a national patron and be the God of majesty and power, still near but unsearchable in His being. Such an idea of God is already implicit in the faith Israel has in the Creator. This thought of creation has never been wanting wholly, but as children, the people of Israel never brought it to consciousness, never came to see its bearing on Providence. Now, the thought of Creation and Providence must be universalized. The voice out of the storm does not speak science. In form, we have to do with Oriental poetry. These pictures are not intended to convey natural knowledge concerning the world, but to reveal the God of redemption in his relation to the world. The passage is like the great hymns of creation—its theme is God, His Majesty and Glory.

The difficulty with Job was that his theology was too narrow, his Providence too special. God is conducting a universe and the land of Uz must submit to play only a part. Job's view that God is the source of all is correct, but His *infinite* mercy must balance His infinite power. There must always be left place for suffering beyond retribution, for suffering enters into the wise plan of the Creator and Governor of the world. It is the coming of God into Job's life that restores his peace and prosperity. It would appear that there is a climax reached (in ch. 38) in the doctrine of creation. The thought of creation in the earlier parts of the Book, though sometimes rising to eloquence, falls far short of that portrayed in the theophany. But, still, the whole Book seems built upon the foundation of creation.

Moreover, we see from Job himself a man may have much knowledge in mind, and still not really, for the time, believe in God as Creator. Only he fully believes who overcomes the world in the

power of the Creator. "Man, by wisdom, knew not God." "Natural religion ends always with a sigh." (Expositor's Job, p. 290.) It is when God reveals Himself—in the glory of Creation and Providence—that the human spirit can find repentance and rest.

The Idea of Creation in Later Prophetism (Universal).

(Isaiah 40-66.)

The great thought of the absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of God which flowered out so gloriously in the Exile, was like a two-century plant, whose roots lay back with the eighth century prophets. Already, in Amos, this thought comes to expression in his ethical monotheism, as he pitilessly tears away the hedge that separates Israel from the world, and says to the people, there is but one righteousness and one God, and there are no favorites of heaven, but such as walk uprightly. Again, in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Jehovah is supreme and uses Assyria or Babylonia as a rod of His anger for the chastisement of Israel. In all this the doctrine of universal sovereignty lies implicitly, 'if not explicitly. But only in the Exile could Israel's lesson be fully learned. It is only in the flood of great waters that Israel can come to consciousness that she is founded upon an Eternal Rock. The prophet, in the earlier days, was a national preacher. He spoke for Jehovah to Jehovah's people. He was a limited minister under a covenant. Others might do as they pleased, as for him and his people, they would serve Jehovah. Jehovah had pledged Himself by the most solemn sanctions that He would be their God and fight their battles. It was not necessary, under these circumstances, to think of Jehovah as infinite or omnipotent, if He were only great and powerful enough to overcome all His and Israel's enemies. But Israel was unfaithful to the covenant. She became corrupt in morals. The ethical prophets began to point out that Israel would go into exile, not because Jehovah was not strong, but because He was righteous and would purify His people. It was this ethical insight, or, to speak theologically, this divine guidance granted the prophets, that eventually saved the people of Israel. But the great mass of the people who went into exile had no real conception of

the greatness of Jehovah. He was to them the God of their history, so full of miracle and wonder in the past; but, now they were brought down to the dust of humiliation. Now, they were the object of taunt-songs of those who said, "Where is thy God?" It was in a situation like this that the old half-formed thought of a Creator came to have a new and larger meaning. The message of the prophet of Isaiah 40-66 begins to appear in the prologue (40:1-11). The prophet's thought already moves in a supernatural atmosphere. Already, in the deep darkness that precedes the dawn, he, with his opened ear, can hear voices in the air, voices of those who are, like servants risen before the dawn, preparing for the great day that is about to come to Israel, and as he listens, one of these heralds of the morning speaks to him and bids him (who had the ear of his people) utter a proclamation that would remove a doubt from the minds of the people, an awful doubt, that the God of Israel might not be able to redeem His people. The prophet sounds out the note as a bugle blast—the note that rings through all his message, that the word of God (the word that creates and upholds all things) can not fail, it shall stand forever.

After the prologue the first verses (40:12-31) are devoted to a connected discourse in which the great theme of the prophet is treated at length. He presents to two classes, those who have been tempted to idolatry and those who are faithful to Jehovah, but despondent, the same remedy. He presents to them the Creator of the ends of the earth who can do all His holy will. He measured the waters of the sea in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a small measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. (12.)

In other words, God handles the world as men handle their small weights and measures. The prophet is not here introducing a proof for God's existence, nor that He is a Creator (Gen. 2:4bff), but that He is *the* Creator of the Universe, with incomparable power. He is also a Creator with infinite wisdom, He needed no counselor; all wisdom is with Him to guide His power. As for nations, they are like the small dust that scarcely affects the balances. No image can be formed of Him; He sits above the earth and men in their perspective are to Him as grasshoppers are to men. With ease, He throws over men the blue, purple, and gold curtain, under which the children of men may dwell. Even princes

are nothing before Him. The only symbol of His power at all worthy of Him is seen in His creation. But, even the heavenly bodies (which deluded men worship) are only minions of the Great Creator. He created them, and He marshals them as a host; He calls them by name, and not one fails in obedient response. Israel, then, is urged to think noble thoughts of the Creator of the ends of the earth. He suffers no change or weariness; He is from age to age the same. Men, indeed, grow weary and faint, but they may, if they will, renew their strength by waiting on God. (27-31.)

All who strive with Israel shall be as nothing, and shall perish. (41:11.) By God's power, the worm Jacob will be changed into a threshing machine and men shall be as chaff (41:14-16), and the hand of the Creator will be evident. (41:20.)

The servant of the Lord is endued with the power of the Spirit, so that he may use even the gentlest methods and never be discouraged and never fail. For, with him is the power from the Creator of heaven and earth, who is the source of all life in frail man. (Cf. Ps. 104:29, 30.) The logic of the prophet is clearly expressed in the first verse of the forty-third chapter: "Thus saith Jehovah that created thee * * * formed thee, * * * fear not, I have redeemed thee." (It is a completed fact in the future.) The prophet seems fairly to revel in the thought, carrying it down to the individual: Every one * * * whom I have created (*bara*), whom I have formed (*yatsar*), yea, whom I have made (*asah*). (43:7.)

He who created Israel by making a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters, covering the horse and the chariot in the Red Sea, will now create a new Israel by another exodus far surpassing the first great event in Israel's history. With what withering sarcasm is the poor idol, made by a man dependent for his strength on bread and water, set over against Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth out the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth. (44:12ff and 44:24.)

The absoluteness of the Creator appears in 45:5a, 7: "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; beside me there is no God; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil (calamity); I am Jehovah that doeth all these things." This passage sets aside all dualism and leaves God absolute sovereign. The figure of the potter fashioning an earthen vessel is used to teach proper submission of creature to Creator. (45:9f.) Again, in

45:12, 13, we have creation and redemption juxtaposed,—the Creator raises up Cyrus, the deliverer. We have a very strong passage in 45:18f: “Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth, that established it and created it not in vain, that formed it to be inhabited.” Jehovah’s purpose, then, is not the destruction of men, but their salvation; this purpose can not be frustrated. Verse 22 shows the outward reach of this purpose: “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: For I am God, and there is none else.” The favorite theme in familiar words is returned to in 48:12. The old doubt is lovingly answered again in 50:2: “Is my hand shortened at all that it can not redeem? Or, have I no power to deliver?” Again, “I am He that comforteth you * * * hast thou forgotten Jehovah, thy Maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?” (51:12, 13.) Only one more reference need be added: “The Holy one of Israel is thy redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall He be called. (54:5.)

This copious, although by no means exhaustive, array of references, will be enough to convince us of the richness and nobleness of our prophet’s thought of God, and it has become clear that the thought of redemption, deliverance, is the burden of his message. Still further, it is evident that the idea of Creator has colored all the prophet’s thought. He uses a variety of words to express his idea of creation, but he uses one word, *bara*, fifteen times in sixteen chapters. (40-55.) This word occurs very rarely, if at all, in genuine passages in pre-Exilic literature. It does not necessarily mean creation out of nothing, but it is the strongest word for creation in the Hebrew language, and is restricted to effortless activity of the divine volition.

We have in this section of Scripture a brilliant example of the power of religious idealism. This great evangelical prophet comes very near the idealism of Jesus. Jesus was filled with the consciousness of the Father. If so, then he sees the rain and sunshine falling on the just and the unjust, and the Father’s good pleasure done in an evil world. So, in his own time and measure, the prophet of the Exile, starting with the idea of God within his own consciousness, can not only read off the things that are to come, but his very faith becomes one of the factors in creating the new day for which he looks. How different it is with Job. He has to listen to the humbling question, “Where wast thou when I laid the foun-

dation of the earth?" And even when he comes face to face with the Creator the great doctrine of Isa. 53 is hidden from him. He has not learned that the Creator of the world is the world's redeemer, and that even the Great Captain of Salvation has to be made perfect through suffering.

The Idea of Creation in the Priestly Element of the Old Testament.

Gen. 1-2:4a.

We come now to the classic passage of the Old Testament on the subject of creation. Up to this point it has been our contention that the doctrine of creation in the Scriptures is not a cosmological theory, dealing speculatively with the method of origin, or with second causes, but that it is a construct of faith, and expresses the relation of God to the world of men. If this view does not hold in the first chapter of Genesis our theory fails, for the chain can not be stronger than its weakest link. And it is perfectly certain that Genesis 1 is a link by itself, and that if anywhere in the Scriptures there is a scientific deliverance, it is here. For, has this chapter not been the battle ground in the warfare—the age-long warfare—between Science and Religion, in which both parties alike agreed that the document in question was scientific,—the scientist, however, contending that the science was falsely so called?

Even when concessions have been made, to the effect that the object in view of the writer was not to *teach* science, it has still been contended that he must agree with the results of all true science. As one writer says: "While earnestly maintaining that the inspired history of creation was given for the instruction of unscientific persons and is, therefore, theological and not scientific, we also believe that all truth is one, and that all revelation, whether in Scripture or in nature, must be ultimately harmonious. Science in its last generalization, must be theology, and theology, in its proper development, must be science. * * * We are, therefore, justified in the expectation that the revelation in the Scriptures, when rightly interpreted (this is to be admitted in a sense different from the writer's), will contain nothing that is inconsistent with the scientific interpretation of nature. While we hold that there are no untimely anticipations of scientific discovery in Genesis, yet we expect that when scientific discoveries are made,

the congruity and dignity of the moral and religious lesson shall not be defeated and marred." (Cocker *op. cit.*, p. 137.)

But the value of Gen. 1 does not lie in any science supposed to be implicit in it. All expressions of empirical knowledge of the world must bear the test of scientific criticism. This knowledge has no vital connection with the knowledge which is of faith. The one has to do with our empirical apprehension of the world, the other with the relation of God to the world. The relation of God to the world may be stated apart from empirical knowledge of the world, since the God of Christian faith, in His being, is distinct from the world. (Kaftan's *Dogmatik*, cf. Rom. 8:28.)

The Biblical view of the world involves two things: The absolute dependence of the world on God, and the necessity that it shall serve God's purpose. How it came to be dependent on Him is related in the story of creation. (Ps. 24:1, 2.) This story is given in its purest in the sign-language, the un-vocal speech, of the firmament and heavenly bodies (Ps. 19:1-3), but when men begin to tell the story they must speak in the language of men, and as the language of men of one time is not the same as that of another time, we must have some clue, some guide, in our investigation. The writer of Gen. 1 is of the priestly class, and we may know from his other writings in the Hexateuch, where his interest lies. He is deeply religious, vigorously monotheistic, but he looks at religion from the priestly point of view. The second part of God's relation to the world, that it must serve His purpose, will be treated by him with a different emphasis from that of an equally religious prophetic writer. In carrying out the religious purpose the priestly writer dwells with interest on points which were of importance to him, but which do not affect the creation idea itself. The order of creation, the duration, the culmination in a day of rest, are all of importance to the sacred writer, but they are not central in the idea of creation. The writer's purpose, to give to God the honor due to His name in creation and redemption, is of eternal value, but his method was historically conditioned. The statement that the narrator's purpose was not mainly religious (Wellhausen) is surprising. He could, indeed, have "said it more distinctly and simply," that "God made the world, and made it good," but he could not thereby have accomplished his supreme aim of showing God's relation to the world, which he conceived under the limitation of the theocracy.

The purpose of the author may be set forth by a quotation: "The writer of the opening chapter of the Book of Genesis (1:1-2:4a) sets before himself the task of giving a comprehensive survey of the origins of Israel's history. It was his purpose to show that the theocracy which became historically realized in Israel as hierarchy was the end and aim of the creation of the world. (Holzinger.) To his consciousness Israel and Israel's sacerdotal institutions stand central to the great movement of history and he consistently works out this grandiose conception to its ultimate origins. Accordingly, he unfolds the narrative in successive gradations, the scope of which narrows from the universal to the particular, as it passes from heaven and earth to Adam, from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, and, lastly, from Abraham to Israel and his descendants." (Hasting's Bib. Diet., under "Cosmogony.")

Under the influence of the exalted idea of the God of the theocracy, who, by the Exile and by the glorious Restoration, had shown Himself above all, and under the influence of the Sabbath, which was the corner stone of the theocracy, nothing could be more natural than the magnificent picture of God creating by the word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good. He does not feel called upon to prove his doctrine any more than He feels called upon to prove the existence of God, which no writer in the Old Testament thinks necessary. He does not give an argument; he does not establish a doctrine by reasoning; he gives a panoramic picture of the Divine Activity, like the great hymns of creation, only more orderly and less imaginative.

There are two ways of viewing the divine activity brought together in the first chapter of Genesis, first, that of the Spirit of God "brooding upon the waters, suggesting the thought of divine nearness or immanence; second, that of God standing above, unentangled with the web of His world actualizing His will by a word. These two modes are so deftly interwoven as to present a unitary view. The parallel sometimes cited between God's creative activity as given in Gen. 1, and that of Marduk in making a garment disappear and reappear, is not to be taken very seriously. The god who has to conquer at such great peril, and with such undaunted courage as to win fifty titles, before he can become a creator, is at the farthest remove from the God of Israel, who, by His spirit, and by His word of free, unhindered power, "spake, and it was done." (Ps. 33:9.)

Does this passage teach *creation out of nothing*?

(1.) The question is not settled if we take Gen. 1:1 as a superscription, making a general statement prior to the real account. Ordinarily interpreted, "heaven and earth" means the universe, and the statement of the text is absolutely sweeping. But this would leave the creation of matter undetermined, "heaven and earth" being a term used for the finished world. (Gen. 2:1-4a, 14:19-22; Ex. 31:17.) It could not then mean matter in Gen. 1:1.

But, still further, *bara* does not guarantee the meaning of creation out of nothing. It means primarily, to hew, or shape; in usage it is restricted to divine activity in producing something new, but does not necessarily involve creation out of nothing, as shown by 1:21, 5:1f, where existent material is used.

(2) But the verse is not a superscription giving a statement prior to creation. *B'reshith* can not introduce an independent sentence, as grammarians point out, and moreover v. 2 has the form of a Hebrew circumstantial clause. So the translation then becomes (according to Ewald, Schrader, Schultz, etc.): "In the beginning when God created heaven and earth,—now, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the waters,—God said, Let there be Light." This passage says nothing as to the origin of matter. It says the first act of the Existing Cosmos was the creation of light. The independent existence of matter is not denied categorically, but there is no room for such a doctrine. God is possessor of heaven and earth. (Gen. 14:19-22.) He makes everything good, that is, to serve His own purpose, without let or hindrance. He speaks and matter obeys. He is absolute Lord of all.

The Idea of Creation in the Psalms.

The idea of creation appears in manifold forms in the Psalms. Psalm 8 has been called a lyric echo of the Mosaic account of creation. (Delitzsch.) This is a hymn to God and not a glorifying of man, except insofar as it teaches of the grace of God to man. The point for us in the Psalm is the use made of the creation-idea. It exalts God, makes His gracious condescension more wonderful. It shows how it is possible that the infinite God can care for frail man. Man is made but a little lower than God (5), and through

the image he bears he becomes God's vicegerent on earth, exercising dominion over all inferior creation. The theme of the Psalm is placed at the beginning and also at the end: "How glorious is thy name in all the earth." God's name is glorious, that is, His manifestation of Himself. And this name is partly known, through the same moon and stars, throughout the world—"in all the earth." It is the hope of the community, singing this hymn, that all the earth may fully know—learning through Israel and submitting to God (salvation).

In the 19th Psalm we have a hymn to the God of the skies by day, as in Psalm 8 we had a night Psalm singing of the moon and stars; then, in the closing verses, we have the exaltation of the Law—the sun of the soul. The silent, but strong and powerful message goes everywhere, "even to the end of the earth." "The work of His hand" will leave men no excuse. God's glory must shine down on men from every quarter of the heavens. The sun is the most impressive of God's creations; the poet describes in glowing language its grandeur. It is like a bridegroom, like a hero, and as it goes forth from its chamber, nothing escapes its all-permeating influence. Think of the Creator of this glorious heavenly body, the most glorious object within our view.

The use made of the idea of creation here is to give men a noble view of God. And then this divine greatness comes to men in His equally glorious law.

Psalm 24 teaches us that the earth, with its fulness and inhabitants, belong to Jehovah, because He founded it and established it. The worshipper in Zion must remember his God is the God of the whole earth. Now that God's ownership and sovereignty are expressed, it becomes a question who can share the blessings of salvation, which is mediated by Zion. Thus we have another example of the order: Creation, Salvation.

Psalm 33 is a hymn of praise to the Creator and Preserver. The Psalm is late; reference to the account of Creation in Gen. 1 is apparent. (6.)

The heathen have been, and shall be, outwitted by Jehovah. They trust in horses and human strength (16, 17), but Jehovah is Israel's power. God is not simply a national God. He sees "all mankind (13b), He fashioned the hearts of all (15a), He frustrates heathen designs (10), but his own purposes are eternal and can not be thwarted (11). Israel, however, is His peculiar herit-

age (12). Those who trust in Jehovah will have their souls delivered from death (18, 19).

The Psalm is in a joyful exultant mood, "For Jehovah's word is right" (4), His goodness manifest everywhere (5). Therefore, He should be praised. The mention of the *word* brings to mind the great saying in Genesis 1:3.

It is not to be wondered at that God discomfitted the enemy for us, as by a word, for by His word the heavens were made (6), "He spake and it was! He commanded, and it stood forth." (9.) The God of Grace is the omnipotent God of creation. On the power of the word compare Eccus. 43:26, and Heb. 1:3.

Psalm 74 is late and comes from a period of persecution, the Chaldean or Maccabean time. The Psalmist cries, "How long?" It seems mysterious that the God who gave His people such a glorious victory over the Egyptians (12, 13), and has provided lights in the heavens, and dry land on the earth, has ordained summer and winter, should now forsake his people. Only deliverance can befit the Creator, who created the world in good faith. (15-17.) It is impossible to think God will allow His dove (Israel) to perish. (19.) "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause." (22.)

Psalm 89 sings of the loving-kindness of Jehovah. (1.) The mercy of God endures forever, His faithfulness will be established on the very heavens. (2.) The heavens will praise the wonders of Jehovah. (5). Jehovah is incomparable, mighty, and faithful. (6, 8.) He rules the proud sea. (9.)

The heavens and earth are His, for He has founded them. (Cf. 24:1, 2.) Even the mountains, Tabor and Hermon, rejoice in the name of Jehovah. We see in this Psalm again the thoughts of creation and salvation brought close together. (12ff.)

Psalm 95:1-7 is a joyful song to Jehovah. He is a great God, He is above all gods. "Above all gods," Cheyne takes as a sarcastic reference to popular phraseology, so that the monotheism is absolute. Compare Ps. 96:4-6, where it is stated that the heathen gods are idols, but Jehovah made the heavens.

The song rests on four thoughts of Jehovah: He is the Rock, as dependable for help as the eternal hills. (1.) He is also a King over all (3), in His control are the heights and depths. It is His good pleasure to be a Shepherd of His people. (7.) But all goes back to His unlimited ownership as Creator. Even the raging restless sea is His, for He made it. And His hands formed the dry land. (5.)

“Come, let us worship and bow down,
Let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker!”

The Fourth Book of the Psalms (90-106) is particularly rich in exalted songs celebrating Jehovah's praise in History and in Creation.

In 94:8f fools are asked if He who formed the people must not be able to punish the enemies of God and their enemies; if He who devised the ear must not hear; and if He who formed the eye must not see? In several passages occurs the phrase, “Jehovah has assumed the sovereignty.”

In 93:1 the consequence stated is, that the world would stand firm and unshaken.

In 96:10 this text is to be proclaimed among the heathen, and it should cause heaven and sea and field and tree to utter a shout of joy.

In 97:1 the text is repeated; and the earth and the multitude of countries are called on to rejoice. In 99:1 the Sovereignty makes the people tremble and the earth quake. This Psalm has a refrain beginning, “Exalt Jehovah our God.” (1:9.)

The “whole earth” is called on to exalt Jehovah with loud acclamation or rejoicing. (98:4 and 100:1.)

The idea of creation is generally coupled with joy and feelings of confidence. It is used as a stimulus for faith. But in Psalm 90 the thought of God, who was before the birth of the mountains and the bringing forth of the earth and the world, is set over against man in his transitoriness—man is of few days and full of trouble. This Psalm is impressive and intended to bring man to repentance—that he may number his days and “enter the gateway of wisdom.” (12.)

Psalm 102 also is full of minor chords. The Psalmist is “distressed” (2), his bones glow like a brand (3), his heart is withered like grass (4), he has been raised up, then hurled down (10), while Jehovah is enthroned forever (12), he prays that he may not be cut off in the midst of his days. (v. 24.) It is plaintive when he adds, “Thy years endure through all generations; Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth. The heavens are the work of thy hands. They vanish, but Thou endurest; they all fade away like a garment; Like a vesture thou changest them, and they change. But thou remainest the same; Thy years have no end.” (24b-27.)

Psalm 103 celebrates God's providence over man. The same figure of the withering grass appears again (15, 16), but the Psalmist's joy is unbroken, as he remembers that "the goodness of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting over those who fear Him. (17.) Jehovah's throne is in heaven, but His dominion is over the universe. (19.) The Psalmist speaks for the community.

The relation between Providence and Creation is somewhat evident in the fact that the great hymn of Providence, Psalm 103, is followed by the most famous of all the Creation Psalms, the 104th. Delitzsch calls this Psalm "A hymn of praise of the God of the Seven Days."

But the poet does not follow the scheme of days rigidly. The passage from the first day to the second within the first strophe is clear; the third day has a great many additional features transposed into it, but the transition to the fourth (19) is evident. In the exigencies of the poem, man is out of place, both he and the animals already appear in fourth day. (20, 21, 23.) But the sea animals appear in their right place. The poem is very bold, materials being used which were too popular and anthropomorphic for the author of Gen. 1.

The poem is a hymn of praise to Jehovah. Jehovah is directly addressed. (The third person is used in Psalm 103.) The purpose of the Psalmist is to bring his own soul and that of others up to nobler thoughts of God as He is revealed in the world of nature which He has created, and which He governs with such tenderness and strength. (27-30.)

The Psalter closes with five Hallelujah hymns. Scarcely from one of them is the creation idea absent, and what their highest aim is, appears most clearly from Psalm 150, in whose six verses there are thirteen exhortations to praise God. The Psalter is an expression of religious souls. This expression clothed itself in many forms. Some of those forms have become archaic for us, but in them lives the spirit of eternal youth. The Psalter is the meeting place of God and the soul. This meeting is the essence of all religion. "True religion is a conviction of the character of God, and the resting upon that alone for salvation." (G. A. Smith, Isaiah, Vol. II., p. 102.)

IV.

THE VALUE OF THE IDEA OF CREATION FOR CHRISTIAN FAITH.*

We have seen that the doctrine of creation does not rise in the Old Testament to the affirmation of creation out of nothing, however near it may graze this conception. We have seen that later Jewish literature shows conflict of opinion on this subject, and that the tradition within the Christian church has not been without variety in its forms. But the fact is clear that in Exilic and post-Exilic times a very high form of the doctrine becomes fundamental in Jewish thought; that creation is one of the most fundamental tenets of the Modern Jewish Church; that creation out of nothing is an infallible dogma of the Roman Catholic Church; and that the same doctrine is taught with equal emphasis in Protestantism. In view of all this we see the importance of the doctrine for faith. Absolute creation is the climax to which faith naturally reaches. If it be claimed that there still remains a chaos, in the story recorded in the first chapter of Genesis (1:2), yet this chaos is under the power of the hovering Spirit of God, which gives it life and real being, and it is obedient to the almighty word. The story knows nothing and can recognize nothing, as standing over against God in successful opposition to Him.

The Gnostics are witnesses of the injury to faith coming from cosmological speculation. Under the stress of the evil and imperfection of the world they set up a demiurge in their thought. They were soon lost in the mazes of mythology. The Church doctrine was a triumph of a larger and more robust faith, which saw "God within the shadow keeping watch above His own;" a faith that transcended the apparent dualism, and made the night side of nature minister to the light. It is to be repeated that it was faith, and not rational explanation that gave the Church the victory over the Gnostics. The Church doctrine received its sharp definition in the warfare with the vain speculations of the Gnostics. It is then the especial aim of the doctrine to shut out emanationism and hylozoism. Such cosmological speculation to account for the origin of the world is not only an offense to the idea of creation, but to the Christian idea of God. The Church doctrine exalts God to the

*After Kaftan's *Dogmatik*, pp. 226-263.

place of Holy Love, and absolute Lordship. The origin of the world, then, is not given to us as science (*gnosis*), as an occurrence in the natural world, but it is given to faith as the work of a personal spirit, as an act in our moral world. It is the supremacy of the Spirit. Science is left free within the realm of natural occurrences of the world, but it must not attempt to enter inaccessible regions. In the individual the certainty of redemption through Jesus Christ reveals to him a new world. Before, he had lived in a world that beat upon him from every side, while its ministers of evil led him beaten and bedraggled into many pitfalls. But now, through Jesus Christ, he has heard his calling, and through Him he has received overcoming power, power to do duty at all cost. He has become convinced of an eternal purpose for him, and he is persuaded that neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, can separate him from his imperative, though also joyful, vocation of duty. That is, through Christ he has learned to overcome the world, as Christ overcame the world. God, then, whose spirit has come to man as an overcoming spirit must dominate the Universe, as man dominates his moral world. This, carried back, ultimately yields the doctrine of creation.

Since the Reformation, moral duties have attained religious significance. The service of God is found in doing the moral task in the world. Now, faith in Providence becomes an indispensable condition for this task. One must be inwardly certain of a Providence including every step and every detail of life. Such certainty does not come through insight and can not be found through rational calculation. It is a matter of faith. This certainty can only come to the man who has laid hold on God by faith; it reaches its highest in him who finds salvation in Jesus Christ. The certainty is not theoretical, but practical. It comes not by induction or deduction, it is the knowledge that comes by faith, and manifests itself as moral and religious certainty, which nothing can gainsay, and which brings the joy of the Lord, and strength and victory. As the Augsburg Confession says, faith in Providence is "a fruit of justifying saving faith." But Providence has for its presupposition, ultimately, the thought of Creation. The necessity for faith in Providence means that faith can only live in a world, which, in total and minutest part, is under the control of God. The Christian can not perform his task in a broken and divided world. The ebb and flow of the world's forces, the storm and stress

of living, must not prevent him from coming through a still unitary world to the feet of God, in full assurance that He rules the world not only with absolute might, but also with perfect love. If rational knowledge is denied him, faith in an eternal purpose for moral life yields him a knowledge that is ready, also, to give a reason for itself, so that the knowledge of faith comes in the end to satisfy reason. The Christian view of the world then rests upon the Christian knowledge of God. It involves the thought of absolute sovereignty of God over the world and the absolute dependence of the world on God; also, that God, in His omnipotence, freely acts in accordance with His holy love, which means that everything in the world serves the purposes of His holy love. On the side of God the two words are: Sovereignty and love. On the side of the world, the two words are: Dependence and teleology. This thought can only reach its goal when it becomes the thought that God for an eternal purpose of love created the world. This faith finds its growing guarantee of validity in that it functions day by day in experience, in creating the moral world of finite purpose and victory. "The mighty hopes that make us men" are part of reality, and the whole must not be inferior to the part.

The actual world in which the Christian must live and conquer is often full of difficulty and embarrassment, leading to most painful doubt. It is only on condition that all things, even the doubts, are dependent on the will of God, that he can press toward his moral goal with confidence. It is with such a view that the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes, which, at first sight, seem too irreligious to find a place in the sacred canon, come to have their true value. They serve to teach us that doubt itself is used by God for revealing new truth. Job, in the end, is triumphant. Ecclesiastes, by the very pessimism of one part of it, drives home its higher truth, that, at the conclusion of the whole matter, the soul must rest in God, not in things; it must find God over all and in all. If it were necessary to believe that anything in the universe existed independent of God which might do battle with Him with possibility of defeating His purpose of holy love, then confidence in God and joy of salvation must suffer injury. This faith, pressed back to its roots, knows that every atom in the universe depends for its living, moving, and being, upon God. This is the essential meaning of the deliverance of faith that God creates the world out of nothing. It is true that the knowledge we come to is not objective knowledge of the understanding. But the understanding is not the measure

of truth and reality. The feeling and willing side of man must be supplied before man becomes the measure of all things which God reveals.

Neither science nor philosophy can help us any further along. Neither science nor philosophy can give us reality. They can only give such as they have. Philosophy attempts to give us a statement of reality, and science attempts to give us control of reality. The world which science describes to us, the world of atoms moving in obedience to resident laws, is an artificial world constructed to aid in getting control of the real world of experience. This artificial construction is only a working hypothesis for control.

This scientific construction can furnish us no bearers of reality that will stand the strain. At the end of our search we come to atoms, but they fail us as final reality and prove to be only aids to reflection. We must turn our eyes from them and find our reality in the world of every day experience.

It follows, then, that natural laws which tie themselves to atoms and aid us in giving a statement of reality, can not come between God and the world. The natural laws may be useful for man's control, but they are nothing real between God and His world.

Hence, we see that natural science can speak no word on our subject. It knows of no absolute beginning. And science can reach no absolute knowledge. It, also, must end in faith, faith in a meaning to the world disclosed to our consciousness. In like manner, Christian knowledge is also faith in a meaning to the world, based upon the highest thoughts revealed to us in our inner consciousness, giving us an assurance that is not ashamed (Rom. 1:16) and that is ready to give a reason for itself. (1 Pet. 3:15.)

If it be said that the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* yields us an unthinkable concept, effort has been made to show that we have at least a human statement of divine truth, indispensable to Christianity, that God is God of every atom in all the universe and without Him and independent of Him there is neither force, nor motion, nor life; that "all things were made by Him * * * and in Him was life." (John 1:3.)

"By *faith* we *understand* that the worlds have been formed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things that do appear." (Heb. 11:3.)

Creation and redemption meet in Jesus Christ in many passages in the New Testament: 1st Cor. 8:6, Col. 1:15-17; John 1:3, 10

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